

Exhibit 24

UNHCR POSITION ON RETURNS TO
MALI – Update III

January 2022

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Map of Mali



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Introduction

1. This position supersedes and replaces UNHCR's *Position on Returns to Mali – Update II* from July 2019.¹ It is based on information available up until 11 January 2022, unless otherwise stated.
2. The security situation in Mali has continued to deteriorate in 2020 and 2021, due to violence by extremist Islamist groups, communal tensions, military operations, criminality as well as political instability, causing a record high in displacement² and a worsening humanitarian situation.³ Two coups in the space of nine months, in August 2020 and May 2021, have further destabilized the country and

¹ UNHCR, *Position on Returns to Mali – Update II*, July 2019, www.refworld.org/docid/5d35ce9a4.html.

² "Ainsi du 1^{er} janvier 2018 au 31 mai 2021, une augmentation de 348 282 personnes déplacées internes a été constatée, suite à la dégradation de la situation sécuritaire dans le pays". International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Rapport sur les déplacements (Juillet 2021)*, 2 September 2021, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/mali-%E2%80%94-rapport-sur-les-d%C3%A9placements-juillet-2021>, p. 5. See also, Care International, *Mali Sees Highest Levels of Displacement in its Recent History Due to a Dangerous Combination of Conflict and Climate Change*, 3 November 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/report/mali/mali-sees-highest-levels-displacement-its-recent-history-due-dangerous-combination>.

³ "The civilian population continues to bear the brunt of the combined effects of the political instability, delays in the implementation of the Agreement and the conflict in the tri-border area between Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, to the detriment of their security and livelihood, as well as to humanitarian access." UN Security Council, *Final Report of the Panel of Experts Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2374 (2017) and Renewed by Resolution 2541 (2020) Concerning Mali*, 6 August 2021, S/2021/714, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2058497.html, p. 4. See also, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Mali: Senior UN Official Calls for Holistic Approach to Tackle Security and Human Rights Crisis*, 9 November 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2063740.html.



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undermined state institutions.⁴

3. In August 2021, the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Mali stated that the deterioration of the security situation had “reached a critical threshold” and warned that “rapidly spreading violence [...] [was] threatening the State’s very survival.”⁵

Political Developments

4. On 15 May 2015, the Government of Mali signed the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali (hereafter the Agreement) with the “Coordination des mouvements de l’Azawad” (CMA), an alliance of armed groups, and with the Platform, a loose coalition of pro-government militias.⁶ The Agreement aimed to create a roadmap to establish a governance system that would take into account local characteristics and reconstruct national unity while respecting territorial integrity and cultural diversity.⁷ However, little progress in implementing the Agreement has been achieved, including during 2020 and 2021.⁸ The Center for Strategic and International Studies noted that the Agreement only addresses a “slice” of Mali’s ongoing insecurity, and has “failed—in its original form and subsequent roadmaps—to address mounting Islamist violence, lethal ethnic tension, and persistent insecurity in Mali’s central regions.”⁹ Importantly, the Agreement did not include as parties any extremist Islamist groups, such as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) or the Al Qaeda-affiliate Jama’at Nusrat Al Islam Wal Muslimin (JNIM).¹⁰
5. On 30 April 2020, the Constitutional Court controversially decided to overturn the results of the legislative elections for 31 seats, out of 147 seats in total.¹¹ This decision sparked protests across Mali, culminating in the formation of the *Mouvement du 5 juin–Rassemblement des forces patriotiques* (M5-RFP).¹² Protests continued throughout June and July 2020,¹³ with protestors calling for the resignation

⁴ International Crisis Group (ICG), *Saving Momentum for Change in Mali’s Transition*, 21 September 2021, www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sahel/mali/304-transition-au-mali-preserver-laspiration-au-changement.

⁵ UN, *Mali Violence Threatens Country’s Survival, Warns UN Human Rights Expert*, 6 August 2021, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/08/1097272>.

⁶ UN Security Council, *Letter Dated 22 January 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations Addressed to the President of the Security Council*, 31 January 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1802709-1.pdf>. On 13 April 2021 Sidi Brahim Ould Sidatt, the president of the CMA, was assassinated, which was characterized as an “enormous loss” to the implementation of the Agreement. UN Security Council, *Final Report of the Panel of Experts Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2374 (2017) and Renewed by Resolution 2541 (2020) Concerning Mali*, 6 August 2021, S/2021/714, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2058497.html, p. 3.

⁷ UN Security Council, *Identical Letters Dated 19 May 2015 from the Chargé d’affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Mali to the United Nations Addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council*, 22 May 2015, S/2015/364, <https://undocs.org/S/2015/364>, and UN Security Council, *Letter Dated 20 August 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations Addressed to the President of the Security Council*, 21 August 2015, S/2015/364/Add.1, <https://undocs.org/en/S/2015/364/Add.1>.

⁸ “Minimal progress toward implementation of the agreement occurred in 2020 because of the sociopolitical crisis, the Aug. 18 coup d’état, the establishment of the Transition, and the COVID-19 pandemic. [...] Five years after its signature, however, the agreement remains far from achieving its objectives and the peace process is not yet irreversible. [...] On numerous occasions, the United Nations Security Council has deplored the parties’ lack of action and the slow pace of implementation, a fact the parties themselves have acknowledged. The government and the two other signatories, the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA) and the Platform, have at times stalled the implementation process, increasing obstacles and imposing delays that contributed to the deterioration of the overall security situation and the related crisis in governance.” The Carter Center, *Report of the Independent Observer: Observations on the Implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, Resulting from the Algiers Process*, December 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/wlre.pdf>, p. 1. See also, UN Security Council, *Situation in Mali: Report of the Secretary-General*, 1 October 2021, S/2021/844, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2062055/S_2021_844_E.pdf, para. 2; UN Security Council, *Situation in Mali: Report of the Secretary-General*, 1 June 2021, S/2021/519, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2053490/S_2021_519_E.pdf, para. 2; Anadolu Agency, *Algiers Peace Agreement Rides Wave of Uncertainty in Mali*, 21 May 2021, www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/algiers-peace-agreement-rides-wave-of-uncertainty-in-mali/2249646; ICG, *Mali’s Algiers Peace Agreement, Five Years On: An Uneasy Calm*, 24 June 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/mali/mali-s-algiers-peace-agreement-five-years-uneasy-calm>.

⁹ Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), *Why Mali Needs a New Peace Deal*, 15 April 2020, www.csis.org/analysis/why-mali-needs-new-peace-deal. See also, Anadolu Agency, *Algiers Peace Agreement Rides Wave of Uncertainty in Mali*, 21 May 2021, www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/algiers-peace-agreement-rides-wave-of-uncertainty-in-mali/2249646.

¹⁰ ICG, *Mali’s Algiers Peace Agreement, Five Years On: An Uneasy Calm*, 24 June 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/mali/mali-s-algiers-peace-agreement-five-years-uneasy-calm>.

¹¹ UN Security Council, *Situation in Mali: Report of the Secretary-General*, 29 September 2020, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2038717/S_2020_952_E.pdf, para. 4. See also, BBC, *Thousands of Protesters Call for Resignation of Mali President*, 19 June 2020, www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-53117095.

¹² UN Security Council, *Situation in Mali: Report of the Secretary-General*, 29 September 2020, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2038717/S_2020_952_E.pdf, para. 4. See also, The New Humanitarian, *What’s Behind the Mass Protests in Mali?*, 10 July 2020, www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2020/07/10/Mali-protests-Keita-Dicko.

¹³ Notably, there were large protests on 19 June 2020 and 10 July 2020. The latter lasted three days; clashes between protestors and security forces in Bamako led to 14 civilian deaths, over 100 injuries and the arrests of several of the M5-RFP leaders. UN Security Council, *Situation in Mali: Report of the Secretary-General*, 29 September 2020, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2038717/S_2020_952_E.pdf, paras 4-5. During the protests, security forces and law enforcement sometimes responded with force. Amnesty International documented “excessive and lethal use of force by law



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persons had been killed in the same village by Dogon hunters; Dana Ambassagou (“the hunters who trust in God”), the most prominent Dogon self-defence militia, was accused of perpetrating the attack, but has denied responsibility.⁴⁶ In July 2021, the leader of Dana Ambassagou announced that “all Fulani residents in areas under his control must declare their presence to the dozogs [Dogon hunters] or risk being assumed jihadists and killed as a result.”⁴⁷

14. The Fulani have occasionally formed their own local self-defence groups, with the support of extremist Islamist groups; these groups have also attacked Dogon villages and have fought together with extremist Islamist groups.⁴⁸ Local ceasefires, while sometimes effective in temporarily reducing communal violence, have also been used by armed groups and militias as tools of control, and have rarely achieved long-term effects.⁴⁹
15. In the Kayes region, communal violence related to descent-based slavery has seen a “dramatic rise” in 2021.⁵⁰ Between 1 January 2021 and 29 October 2021, 77 persons were injured, and one person was killed, in violent attacks against persons who are considered ‘slaves’ by certain communities in Kayes due to their parentage.⁵¹ On 28 September 2021, a group of people from this caste were celebrating

d'enquête spéciale sur les graves atteintes aux droits de l'homme commises à Ogossagou le 14 février 2020, 18 March 2020, <https://minusma.unmissions.org/conclusions-de-la-mission-d%E2%80%99enqu%C3%AAtes-sp%C3%A9ciales-sur-les-graves-atteintes-aux-droits-de-l%E2%80%99homme-commises>.

⁴⁶ HRW, *When Will There be Justice for Mali Massacre?*, 22 March 2021, www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/22/when-will-there-be-justice-mali-massacre; ICG, *Reversing Central Mali's Descent into Communal Violence*, 9 November 2020, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2041373/293-reversing-central-malis-descent.pdf, pp. 1, 14.

⁴⁷ UN Security Council, *Situation in Mali: Report of the Secretary-General*, 1 October 2021, S/2021/844, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2062055/S_2021_844_E.pdf, para. 43. Additionally, in the first quarter of 2021 MINUSMA documented attacks by Dana Ambassagou against Dogon civilians who had participated in peace agreements with the Fulani and were thus considered traitors. MINUSMA, *Note sur les tendances des violations et abus de droits de l'homme au Mali: 1er janvier – 31 mars*, May 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2053131.html, para. 43. “The UN and others have also reported on Dozo abuses in Ségou since late 2020, including the kidnapping of numerous villagers for ransom, killing of community leaders who refuse to join their ranks, and the alleged gang rape of a woman.” HRW, *Civilians in Mali's Ségou Region at Risk*, 1 November 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2063555.html.

⁴⁸ “These Fulani armed groups are also often considered responsible for attacks upon Dogon civilians. Since 2019, their development has coincided with a significant increase in large-scale attacks upon Dogon villages. In other words, the non-jihadist armed groups recruiting among the Fulani are less structured and constitute a lesser force than jihadists or the Dana Ambassagou movement.” ICG, *Reversing Central Mali's Descent into Communal Violence*, 9 November 2020, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2041373/293-reversing-central-malis-descent.pdf, p. 15. From 1 January to 31 March 2021: “Les milices et groupes armés peuls ont mené sept attaques ayant occasionné 18 morts tandis que les groupes armés dogons ont perpétré six attaques qui ont conduit au meurtre de six civils. [...] A titre illustratif, sept hommes, ont été tués par des éléments armés peuls, le 26 janvier 2021 au cours de l'attaque du village dogon Tinteri dans la région de Bandiagara.” MINUSMA, *Note sur les tendances des violations et abus de droits de l'homme au Mali: 1er janvier – 31 mars*, May 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2053131.html, paras 39, 42.

⁴⁹ For example, a peace agreement brokered by an extremist Islamist group in Koro included conditions such as “to expel Dan An Ambassagou; a ban on arms; introduction of sharia-based family laws and taxes; a ban on any contact with the Malian state and army; and respect for customary agreements governing the use of land and resources”. Danish Institute for International Studies, *When Jihadists Broker Peace*, 20 January 2021, www.diiis.dk/en/research/when-jihadists-broker-peace. See also, ICG, *Mali: Enabling Dialogue with the Jihadist Coalition JNIM*, 10 December 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2065073/306-mali-jnim.pdf, p. 13; OHCHR, *Mali: Senior UN Official Calls for Holistic Approach to Tackle Security and Human Rights Crisis*, 9 November 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2063740.html. “Even when they do lead to ceasefires, the lulls in fighting tend to be short-lived. Finally, most agreements exclude jihadists or include them only indirectly. The rare local agreements, like those of Baye and Ouenkoro, which include jihadists – albeit indirectly – seem to have succeeded in reducing the violence at least temporarily, unlike the agreements that exclude them.” ICG, *Reversing Central Mali's Descent into Communal Violence*, 9 November 2020, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2041373/293-reversing-central-malis-descent.pdf, p. 20. In central Mopti, “[extremist Islamist groups] posed as a mediator between Fulani and Dogon communities to undermine the influence of the ethnic Dogon-majority militia Dan Na Ambassagou and the presence of state forces in the region.” ACLED, *Sahel 2021: Communal Wars, Broken Ceasefires, and Shifting Frontlines*, 17 June 2021, <https://acleddata.com/2021/06/17/sahel-2021-communal-wars-broken-ceasefires-and-shifting-frontlines/>. See also, MINUSMA, *Note sur les tendances des violations et atteintes aux droits de l'homme et au droit international humanitaire au Mali: 1er avril – 30 juin 2021*, August 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2059320.html, para. 4; Reuters, *Where State Is Weak, Mali Militants Broker Talks between Rival Clans*, 28 August 2020, www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-islamists-mali-insight-idUSKBN2500LA.

⁵⁰ UN, *Rights Experts Condemn 'Dramatic Rise' in Attacks on So-Called Slaves in Mali*, 19 July 2021, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/07/1096082>. See also, OHCHR, *Mali: End to Impunity for Barbaric Attacks on "Slaves" Long Overdue—UN Experts*, 29 October 2021, www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27730&LangID=E; The Africa Report, *Mali: 'There Is No Specific Law Criminalising Descent-Based Slavery'*, 18 October 2021, www.theafricareport.com/136835/mali-there-is-no-specific-law-criminalising-descent-based-slavery/; OHCHR, *Mali: UN Experts Condemn Increased Attacks on 'Descent-Based Slaves', Deplore Government's Failure to Act*, 19 July 2021, www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27324&LangID=E.

⁵¹ Kayes “has been the site of [eight] attacks since January [2021], in which one person was killed, at least 77 injured and more than 3,000 ‘slaves’ displaced.” OHCHR, *Mali: End to Impunity for Barbaric Attacks on "Slaves" Long Overdue—UN Experts*, 29 October 2021, www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27730&LangID=E. “Twice as many people – mostly so-called ‘descent-based slaves’ – have been injured this year [as of July 2021] as in 2020.” OHCHR, *Mali: UN Experts Condemn Increased Attacks on 'Descent-Based Slaves', Deplore Government's Failure to Act*, 19 July 2021, www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27324&LangID=E. For the second quarter of 2021: “Enfin, un autre type de violence impliquant des acteurs privés dits « pro-esclavagistes » a continué à être documenté dans la région de Kayes. Au cours de la période considérée, au moins 51 personnes considérées comme « esclaves » ont été blessées alors qu’elles tentaient de participer à des réunions publiques ou de se rendre au marché local.” MINUSMA, *Note sur les tendances des violations et atteintes aux droits de l'homme et au droit international humanitaire au Mali: 1er avril – 30 juin 2021*, August 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2059320.html, para. 24. See also, The Africa Report, *Mali:*



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Mali's independence day when a group brutally attacked their gathering, bound them hand and foot and publicly humiliated them.⁵²

Extremist Islamist Groups

16. In the centre and northern regions of Mali, extremist Islamist groups continue to operate and control territory.⁵³ Groups active in Mali include JNIM,⁵⁴ ISGS,⁵⁵ and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).⁵⁶ During 2020 and 2021, JNIM and ISGS have continued to attack each other, state forces, international forces, local militias and civilians.⁵⁷ During the second quarter of 2021, extremist Islamist groups were responsible for 54 per cent of the violence against civilians documented by MINUSMA, including in Mopti, Gao, Menaka, but also in the southern region of Sikasso.⁵⁸ JNIM is reported to have strengthened its presence in the southern regions of Ségou and Sikasso.⁵⁹ Similarly, the US Department of State observed that attacks by extremist groups and criminal elements continued to reach beyond the northern regions to the central regions of Mopti and Ségou and to the western region of Kayes.⁶⁰

⁵² 'There Is No Specific Law Criminalising Descent-Based Slavery', 18 October 2021, www.theafricareport.com/136835/mali-there-is-no-specific-law-criminalising-descent-based-slavery/.

⁵³ France 24, 'Slaves Won't Have a Party in our Village': Attack Reveals Mali's Brutal, Ongoing Caste System, 14 October 2021, <https://observers.france24.com/en/africa/20211014-mali-descent-based-slavery-attack-party>. Following "robust advocacy efforts" by the UN in the Kayes region, the perpetrators of the attack were arrested on 1 November 2021 and remained in detention as of 4 January 2022. UN Security Council, *Situation in Mali: Report of the Secretary-General*, 4 January 2022, S/2021/1117, <https://undocs.org/S/2021/1117>, para. 54.

⁵⁴ "Dans les régions du centre et du nord, les actions des groupes tels que Jama'at nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM), l'Etat Islamique dans le Grand Sahara (EIGS) et d'autres groupes similaires (ci-après JNIM et autres groupes similaires) se sont poursuivies. En particulier, l'emprise territoriale du JNIM s'est accentuée au centre du Mali, avec un glissement notable de leurs activités en direction de Ségou et Sikasso, le long de la frontière avec le Burkina Faso." MINUSMA, *Note sur les tendances des violations et atteintes aux droits de l'homme et au droit international humanitaire au Mali: 1er avril - 30 juin 2021*, August 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2059320.html, para. 3. "In the northern regions, the situation has been marked by the activity of violent extremist groups, including the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara." UN General Assembly, *Report of the Independent Expert on the Situation of Human Rights in Mali*, 3 February 2021, A/HRC/46/68, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2046480/A_HRC_46_68_E.pdf, para. 8. "An official from Ségou [in central Mali] reported that of the region's seven local administrative areas, five were 'occupied' by JNIM fighters who have chased away teachers and health workers, and are contributing to food insecurity by attacking and killing farmers and besieging and blockading villages." HRW, *Civilians in Mali's Ségou Region at Risk*, 1 November 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2063555.html. See also, US Department of State, *Country Report on Terrorism 2020: Mali*, 16 December 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2065417.html. For a map which shows the territory controlled or contested by JNIM, without reference to other extremist Islamist groups, see ICG, *Mali: Enabling Dialogue with the Jihadist Coalition JNIM*, 10 December 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2065073/306-mali-jnim.pdf, p. 32.

⁵⁵ JNIM was formed out of four other groups, and some reports still refer to sub-organizations, such as Katiba Macina or Ansar Dine. See CSIS, *Examining Extremism: Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin*, 15 July 2021, www.csis.org/blogs/examining-extremism/examining-extremism-jamaat-nasr-al-islam-wal-muslimin. JNIM is the "largest jihadist force in the central Sahel." Additionally: "Since March 2017, when JNIM formed, its attacks have resulted in more than 2,254 deaths in Mali, accounting for nearly one quarter of all the conflict-related fatalities in the country (9,119)." ICG, *Mali: Enabling Dialogue with the Jihadist Coalition JNIM*, 10 December 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2065073/306-mali-jnim.pdf, p. 3.

⁵⁶ The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) is also referred to by its French name and acronym, l'Etat Islamique dans le Grand Sahara (EIGS). CSIS, *Examining Extremism: Islamic State in the Greater Sahara*, 22 July 2021, www.csis.org/blogs/examining-extremism/examining-extremism-islamic-state-greater-sahara. The leader of ISGS was killed by a targeted French drone strike in September 2021. France 24, *Sahrawi: The Top Sahel Jihadist Killed in French 'Opportunistic Hit'*, 16 September 2021, www.france24.com/en/africa/20210916-the-assassinated-abou-walid-al-sahrawi-france-s-major-enemy-in-the-sahel. See also, US Department of State, *Country Report on Terrorism: ISIS-Greater Sahara*, 16 December 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2065688.html.

⁵⁷ AQIM was weakened during 2020 when its leader was killed. Jamestown Foundation, *One Year After the Death of Abdelmalek Droukdel AQIM Falls into Obscurity*, 7 May 2021, <https://jamestown.org/program/briefs-349/>; Middle East Institute, *The Last Emir?: AQIM's Decline in the Sahel*, 7 December 2020, www.mei.edu/publications/last-emir-aqims-decline-sahel.

⁵⁸ ACLED, *Sahel 2021: Communal Wars, Broken Ceasefires, and Shifting Frontlines*, 17 June 2021, <https://acleddata.com/2021/06/17/sahel-2021-communal-wars-broken-ceasefires-and-shifting-frontlines/>.

⁵⁹ MINUSMA, *Note sur les tendances des violations et atteintes aux droits de l'homme et au droit international humanitaire au Mali: 1er avril - 30 juin 2021*, August 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2059320.html, para. 13.

⁶⁰ MINUSMA, *Note sur les tendances des violations et atteintes aux droits de l'homme et au droit international humanitaire au Mali: 1er avril - 30 juin 2021*, August 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2059320.html, para. 3. "JNIM has strengthened its positions in Sikasso Region, where jihadist militant activity has surged." ACLED, *Sahel 2021: Communal Wars, Broken Ceasefires, and Shifting Frontlines*, 17 June 2021, <https://acleddata.com/2021/06/17/sahel-2021-communal-wars-broken-ceasefires-and-shifting-frontlines/>. "[I]ncident trends indicate a continued shift from the centre to the south of the country, with an increase noted in attacks by unidentified armed individuals or members of violent extremist and terrorist groups in Koutiala, San and Sikasso, as well as increased communal tension affecting in particular the Diabali and Dogofri communes in Niono district, Ségou Region." UN Security Council, *Situation in Mali: Report of the Secretary-General*, 4 January 2022, S/2021/1117, <https://undocs.org/S/2021/1117>, para. 33.

⁶⁰ US Department of State, *2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Mali*, 30 March 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/document/2048168.html. See also, Al Jazeera, *Several Soldiers Killed in Central Mali Attack*, 6 October 2021, www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/6/several-soldiers-killed-in-central-mali-attack-2; Institute for Security Studies, *How Western Mali Could Become a Gold Mine for Terrorists*, 1 April 2021, <https://issafica.org/iss-today/how-western-mali-could-become-a-gold-mine-for-terrorists>. "Depuis octobre 2020 il y a une évolution du nombre d'incidents attribués aux GANE dans les régions de Kayes, Koulikoro et Sikasso. Il y a eu progressivement 25 incidents en 2019, puis 65 incidents en 2020 et 73 incidents août 2021, montrant l'extension du conflit armé dans les localités du nord et du centre du pays." OCHA, *Analyse de l'accès humanitaire au Mali*, 16 December 2021, www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2065781/mli_rpt_humaccess_juillet-septembre_2021.pdf, p. 3.